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Synopses of Important Articles.

The Historic Origin of the New Testament Scriptures.* The historic origin of the Scriptures is something apart from the question of their inspiration which belongs to their ideal origin. The apostles had at first little thought of writing down their recollections of Jesus' life. They expected Christ to come in their generation. Their constant preaching tended to preserve and keep in a more or less fixed form the tradition of His life. This became one source of our Gospels. But there were written sources too and some have conjectured an original written source on which the three Synoptics built. This was the Hebrew Matthew. Thus the written Gospels we have grew up as naturally and humanly as was the earthly origin and development of the Incarnate Word. There was no thought of their being Sacred Scriptures alongside of the Old Testament Scriptures until a much later period. They were written like the epistles for temporary needs to satisfy the wants of their generation. But whatever difficulties may exist as regards the exact historic facts concerning their authorship, their historic origin cannot be questioned. The difficulty lies in the question of their credibility. Consider four remarks, (1) we must distinguish between the witness to facts and the inferences as to the meaning and ground of these facts. The apostles were certainly competent witnesses to the facts connected with the resurrection. Whether they rightly interpreted the facts is another question. (2) The objection is made that the bias of the apostles in favor of miracles makes their testimony for them of no value. The reply is that their bias was rather against the character that Christ displayed and, as the writings themselves show, they were forced against their prejudices to accept His ideal and character; (3) these disciples were competent to give their own experience growing out of their faith in Christ. This testimony was to the Messiahship and salvation of Jesus Christ. Still this testimony, while strong, is subjective; (4) the strongest objective argument is the merely historical representation of Christ given in the Gospels

An earnest and well-reasoned argument.

The Egypticity of the Pentateuch, an argument for its traditional authorship.† Believing in the Mosaic editorship of the Pentateuch the author seeks to find evidence from Egyptian sources in favor of this view:—(1) The Hebrew designation of Egypt is not "Kham" the monumental term, but "Mizraim" a dual Hebrew form. This use of the dual of an Egyptian word ("Mzaru," fortress, fortified) reveals the presence of an editor who was, like Moses, an Egyptian; for the idea of duality pervades the whole of Egypt's history and literature. The editor must have been familiar with the details of Egyptian thought, since he has described it not as "Kham," but as the two

* By Thos. G. Apple, D. D., LL. D., in *Reformed Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1890, pp. 429-448.

† By Rev. Alfred H. Kellogg, D. D., in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, October, 1890, pp. 533-555.

"M-zars," just as every king was designated "lord of the two lands." (2) The Hebrew and Egyptian traditions as to the origin of the Egyptians and their ethnic and linguistic affinities. It is tested by the latest scientific research. The Egyptians, with the Cushites and Canaanites were descendants of Ham and, as the Pentateuch represents them, lived before dispersion at their home in the cradle of the race in Asia. The Hebrew tradition on this point is strictly Egyptian in its conception and expression and shows an Egyptian editor. (3) The Hebrew cosmogony shows familiarity with Egyptian, rather than with Babylonian sources. The very expression, e. g., "in beginning," "morning and evening" are Egyptian; the "chaos" and the word for God "Elohim" as contrasted with Jehovah Elohim in chap. 2, are suggestive. Ex. 6: 2, 3 is to be taken literally, that "Jehovah" was first used by Moses; but how are we to explain the frequent use of the name "Jehovah" in the book of Genesis, unless as an undesigned coincidence reflecting the editorship of the very man who in reality first used it? The idea of "Jehovah" as the "being" or "becoming," "the self-existent one" pervades all Egyptian literature. The idea is suggested by the "ankh" or cross borne in the hand of every Egyptian God. (4) The story of the Hebrews and their relations with Egypt furnishes the culminating argument for the Mosaic editorship. The editor knew all about Egypt. He made no mistake. His accuracy is seen in the most minute particulars. No Hebrew living after Moses had the degree of familiarity required. In short, "no prophet or scribe of Israel, subsequent to Moses' era, can be mentioned, who, as a Redactor, would have edited the Pentateuch in so Egyptian a way."

Acute, interesting, definite and sturdy; but sometimes also far-fetched, illogical, dogmatic, and assumptive.

John the Forerunner.* John the Baptist and Paul have had scarcely less influence than Jesus upon Christianity. John was properly the founder of the ecclesiastical features of Christianity. He was an agitator but would have had only transitory influence but for the fact that Jesus took up his work. He stirred men to act but Jesus taught and stirred them to think. The word "repent" and the rite of baptism are his contribution to Christianity. He did not prepare the people to receive Jesus or prepare Jesus for his work. He simply aroused men. Hillel was the one who most influenced Jesus and the thought of Christianity. John was one of those prophets so characteristic of the Hebrew nation. What contributed to his success was the political and religious hopes of his nation and time. But his success was greater than he expected. He had roused a revolution. The whole nation was ready for war. He might have been Messiah himself. But he did not see his way ahead and turned the thoughts and expectations of the people to another leader, Jesus. These two leaders kept working together for some time. Each appeared equally the founder of a religion and it may well have been doubted then which was to be greater. But Jesus had ideas and John had not. So the influence of the latter gradually fell off. Jesus aroused the people to think. John's disciples gradually went over to Jesus. By this act Christianity was made a composite religion. The disciples of John demanded baptism and repentance. Thus the simplicity and directness of Christ's religion were

* By Austin Bierbower, in *Unitarian Review*, Oct. 1890, pp. 302-318.